DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 372 138 UD 029 976

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TITLE Pro-social Awareness Skills Strategies that Provide Behaviorally Correct Options to the Elementary Grade Urban Learner.
PUB DATE 93
NOTE 56p.; Ed.D. Practicum, Nova University.
PUB TYPE Dissertations/Theses - Practicum Papers (043)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC03 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Academic Achievement; Achievement Tests; *Behavior Change; Conflict Resolution; Elementary School Students; Grade 3; *Interpersonal Competence; Knowledge Level; Pretests Posttests; Primary Education; *Prosocial Behavior; *Student Attitudes; Teaching Methods; Urban Schools; *Urban Youth; Workshops

ABSTRACT

This practicum was devised to promote academic achievement by reducing problem behavior in third graders. Students developed behaviorally correct options to promote prosocial behavior and avoidance of hostile situations in their social context by identifying social deficits and using discovery and transfer-learning techniques. Student pre- and post-assessment activities were developed, and behavior and academic progress charts were prepared. Child-centered mini-workshops presented individualized activities relative to identified social deficits and conflict-avoidance options. Pre- and post-achievement tests were administered, and a child-behavior checklist was completed for each child. The 21 subjects also completed pre- and post-self-assessment activities. Data analysis reveals that the targeted participants in the behavior-change practicum were more likely to avoid hostile situations and to focus on academic achievement. Posttest behavior-checklist observations and posttest academic-achievement results demonstrate an awareness by participants of what being prosocial means, knowledge of how to apply their social skills, and improved academic achievement. Four appendixes contain a strategies chart, a parent-notification letter, a progress chart, and a certificate of participation. (Contains 14 references.) (SLD)

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ED 372 138

Pro-social Awareness Skills Strategies that Provide Behaviorally Correct Options to the Elementary Grade Urban Learner

by

Tharyll W. Pretlow

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A Practicum I Report Presented to the
Ed.D. Program in Child and Youth Studies
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of Doctor of Education

NOVA UNIVERSITY

1993

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PRACTICUM APPROVAL

The practicum, Prosocial Awareness Skills Strategies, took place during the period 29 March-18 June 1993.

Verifier: Patricia C McCrimmon
Patricia McCrimmon, Principal
Washington, D.C.

July 18, 1993
Date

This practicum report was submitted by Tharyll W. Pretlow under the direction of the adviser listed below. It was submitted to the Ed.D. Program in Child and Youth Studies and approved in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education at Nova University.

Approved:

August 10, 1993
Date of Final Approval of Report

Ann E. Fordham
Ann E. Fordham, Ed.D., Adviser

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would be remissed if the following individuals were not acknowledged for their guidance and or support from which I obtained in order to reach this major educational milestone. Foremost, I am especially grateful to Dr. Ann E. Fordham, practicum advisor, for her detailed critiques and offerings of useful suggestions in the review of the practicum proposal and report. A special thanks is also extended to Dr. Patricia C. McCrimmon, school principal, for her support in allowing me to implement the PASS project.

Finally, I once again owe a great debt of gratitude to Larry, my husband, for his continuous efforts to support my professional endeavors and the extra loving attention which he provided our two young children during my busiest academic periods.

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ABSTRACT

Pro-social Awareness Skills Strategies that Provide Behaviorally Correct options to the Elementary Grade Urban Learner. Tharyll W. Pretlow, 1993: Practicum Report, Nova University, Ed.D. Program in Child and Youth Studies. Pro-social/Social Skills/Academic Achievement/Behavior Modification

This practicum was devised to promote academic achievement by reducing problem behavior in third graders. Based upon identified social deficits and through discovery and transfer learning techniques, the children developed behaviorally correct options to promote pro-social behavior and avoidance of hostile situations within their social context.

The writer administered a pre and post achievement test; completed a child behavior checklist on each targeted student, developed student pre and post self-assessment activities, constructed behavior and academic progress charts, designed child-centered mini workshops which presented individualized activities relative to identified social deficits and avoidance options.

Analysis of the data revealed that the targeted participants in the behavior change practicum were more likely to avoid hostile situations and focus more on academic achievement when given the option. Based upon post behavior checklist observations and post academic achievement results, the twenty-one targeted participants demonstrated an awareness of what is meant by being pro-social, how to apply their social skills after awareness training, and improved academically.

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Chapter I

INTRODUCTION

Although the majority of the disadvantaged elementary grade students, within this writer's work setting, arrived to school motivated to learn, their social context often seemed dysfunctional. Davidson and Seidman (1974) reviewed behavioral modification studies and found a correlation between children's individual social conduct and their academic achievement level. In the writer's professional opinion, as an elementary classroom teacher, the elementary grades are social transitional milestones as well as academic milestones. Yet, special emphasis is not placed upon the child's pro-social context.

In view of the rise in child and youth violence in urban inner-city low socioeconomic neighborhoods (Nemeth, 1992), and the Brophy and McCaslin (1992) study findings on how teachers handle misbehavior, student disruptive social behavior that impedes academic achievement was a major problem within this writer's work setting.

Description of Community

The community is an urban inner-city neighborhood with an elementary public school which serviced 375 disadvantaged predominately Black-American children that resided in low-income renovated apartment complexes. Most households were single parent receiving public assistance. This qualified the children for the school free breakfast and lunch program. The school counselor's records indicated, school-wide, that the average parent seemed to struggle with social, alcohol, and drug problems in addition to economic problems. The social context of the family environment also appeared to be dysfunctional. In order to soften the negativeness associated with being labeled economically disadvantaged or deprived, these students were also referred to as urban learners. The term urban learner did not merely refer to the geographical location of a student's learning facility. The term also connoted the conditions under which they resided, conditions that seem to impact upon their individual social context and educational process. Although Chapter I services were provided to all students that met the academic deficit criteria regardless of income status, the affluent child attending the same school, individually, was not labeled as an "urban learner." However, relative to the low economic status of the total community as well as the

school-wide low math and reading standardized test scores, the school was identified as a Chapter I school and received full funds and services. These services and funds were designed to increase the cultural awareness and academic achievement levels of the economically disadvantaged at-risk learner, "urban learner."

Writer's Work Setting and Role

In the role of classroom teacher, certified to teach in grades first through sixth, i.e., all disciplines relative to the elementary grade school curriculum, this writer was also responsible for each student's pro-social development as well as grade level educational progression.

During this practicum project, this writer was charged with the academic and social instruction of 24 third grade Black-American "urban learners." There were 9 boys and 15 girls in the age group of 8 to 9 years old with 2 of the 24 targeted urban learners 10 years of age.

Three students assigned to this writer's regular third grade classroom received special educational services. One of those three students spent half a day in the regular classroom and the other half day in the special education setting. Although the three special education students were mainstreamed into the regular classroom environment,

they were not included in the practicum project. Eight of the remaining 21 targeted urban learners were identified in the second grade by the May 1992 Comprehensive Tests of Basic Skills (CTBS) as being 2 instructional levels below the national norm, therefore, they received Chapter I services.

Chapter II

STUDY OF THE PROBLEM

Problem Description

The targeted urban learners henceforth called the participants exhibited physical aggression toward peers and did not follow classroom procedures. This self-directed disruptive conduct seemed to inhibit their individual ability to establish a worthy harmonious relationship with their peers. Hence, academic achievement was impeded and current learning levels did not progress. Even though, there were frequent disruptive incidents during instructional periods, the problem was most obvious during independent activities or group periods.

In order to ensure clarity, the following definition of terms will be used: Pro-social is defined as an active association towards the establishment of a harmonious relationship with others; behaviorally correct options is a selection of pro-social skills that when appropriately applied reduces the probability of disruptive conduct or problem behavior.

Problem Documentation

Documentation used to support the existence of problem behavior and its impact on academic achievement within this writer's work context were the Level 1 Wide-Range Achievement Test-Revised (W-RAT) (Jastak & Wilkinson, 1984), the Child Behavior Checklist (CBCL) Teacher's Report Form (Achenbach, 1986), a composite of student problem behavior (Odom-Winn & Dunagan, 1991) referrals to the principal or school counselor, student self-evaluation, and the Walker-McConnell Subscales of Social Competence and School Adjustment (1988).

The W-RAT was used to measure achievement in math and reading. When compared to national norms, the targeted urban learners scored within the 2nd percentile. Teacher's observations checked on the CBCL Teacher's Report Form during a two month observation period and the composite student behavior based upon at least 5 teacher referrals to the school counselor and 3 referrals to the principal indicated that 14 targeted third graders were non-compliant, not considerate of others, defiant, argumentative, disturbed other pupils, did not seem to feel guilty after misbehaving, got into many fights, hung around others who got into trouble, talked out of turn, produced poor school work, and threatened other pupils.

The 14 students' parents were sent, each month, at least two Academic Deficiency Notices that cited misbehavior

as a cause of academic failure. Hence, no parent contact could be made relative to positive reasons at that time.

As an added dimension to further document the existence of the problem, the targeted urban learners completed a ten minute timed student self-evaluation activity listing descriptive words depicting a self perception of their individual behavior. Each participant averaged at least five negative words.

Lastly, the Walker-McConnell which contains three subscales with 43 positively stated social skills were employed to document the targeted urban learners' pro-social deficits. The three subscales scores indicated, on the average, that the participants were within the 46th percentile for their grade placement level. However, with regard to the peer-preferred subscale of social behavior deficits, the participants were unable to interact with a number of different peers and read social situations accurately. The school adjustment subscale indicated that pro-social behavior deficits did exist and these deficits were impeding academic achievement as well as the development of peer interpersonal relationships. The participants displayed on an average the following school adjustment pro-social behavior deficits: never showed sympathy for others, never compromised with peers

when situations call for compromising, seldom listened carefully to teacher instructions and directions for assignments, did not display independent study skills, did not walk away from or avoid fights, and seemed unable to walk away from teasing or name calling.

In summation, relative to this writer's power base, the Teacher-Preferred Social Behavior Subscale indicated that the participating elementary grade urban learners had social skills deficits in sensitivity, empathy, cooperation, self-control, and peer interpersonal relationships. They also had deficits in attending task, use of free time, listening and following directions, working adequately with minimum teacher support, and responding to conventional behavior management techniques.

Causative Analysis

The professionals have cited the following causes of problem behavior in children: learning disabilities, a stressful family environment, lack of democratic values, how student view the classroom, home-school relationship, and prenatally crack (drug) and alcohol exposed. In view of the data collected, it seemed that most of the urban learners' school pro-social deficits were rooted in the home and community. Therefore, this writer has cited one possible cause and several effects of problem behavior

relative to the participants. A major cause seemed to be that most Black-American urban learners were culturally and socially disadvantaged as well as living in economically deprived homes.

There seemed to be many variables. Academically delayed, prior retention, and low self-esteem were most likely associated with these urban learners. They were seeking attention. They displayed hyperactiveness. Poor diets also seemed to be a factor. Their individual attention span were relatively short for their age group. When the participants were asked, during this practicum implementation phase, to state causes of poor academic and unsatisfactory conduct grades, each cited incidents that blamed their problem behavior on classroom peers.

Many of the participants' parents had not completed high school. Pro-social behavior, values, and respect for human life did not appear to be emphasized in the home. Thus, the participants did not seem aware that they were demonstrating problem behavior. Since most of the students' home life seemed to be in a state of dysfunction, this was assumed to be the basis of the confrontational attitudes.

Based upon the writer's definition of pro-social and if by chance the participants were aware that they were indeed demonstrating problem behavior, according to

them, being pro-social placed them in vulnerable situations, as being confrontational was viewed as a survival skill in 12 of the targeted urban learners' social context. In addition, the refusal to accept responsibility for individual negative actions was a by-product of self preservation in the home and community transferred to the school environment. The participants were cognizant of the non-existence of a worthy home-school relationship, i.e., there remains parental disagreement with the "learning organization." (Senge, 1990). Although most parents had acquired very little secondary education, parent efficacy remained a factor.

Relationship of the Problem to the Literature

The literature review revealed the generalizability of problem behavior in the elementary school setting as correlated to academic achievement. The review also revealed implications for social skills training, and the re-evaluation of child social developmental programs.

In this writer's quest to seek an innovative solution to the old problem of disruptive behavior impeding academic achievement, the following domains were reviewed: psychology in the schools, special education of communicative disorders, a sociological view of classroom management, and aesthetic learning, i.e., art in education. Documentation supporting the problem range from program

evaluations of behavior modification strategies to perspectives of family therapists and school consultants on the behavioral problems relative to the children's social context. Each domain focused on an individualized approach to this problem. Ideas were generated from these domains as possible solutions to improve the social behavior of the targeted students.

The reviews of the literature also revealed research and evaluation findings on strategies designed to improve the behavior of elementary school children and subsequently their academic achievement. The Brophy and McCaslin (1992) findings of a recent study reported on 12 types of problem behavior. This writer perceived the strategies the teachers used for coping with these problems were universal and general in nature. The findings revealed that most elementary school teachers focused on short termed solutions and recommended coercive actions and punitive measures for aggression and other disruptive conduct. Peeks (1992), a family therapist and school consultant advocates understanding the child's social context in order to change the child's problem behavior. Trovato, Harris, Pryor, and Wilkinson (1992) found that reinforcements, i.e., free play period, drawing, helping the teacher, and etc., were exchanged for positive behavior during instructional periods. Hence, when Trovato et al. (1992) evaluated

regular elementary classroom teachers as mediators for behavior change in the regular classroom, they found that strategies which taught children how to maintain and sustain behavior opposed to conditioning strategies, coercive action, and punitive measures offered long term results. In addition, the use of parents as partners in the behavior change project produced measurable improvements.

Home-based reinforcement was most effective in controlling problem behavior relative to academic achievement. Yet all strategies cited in the literature seemed teacher imposed, controlling, and generalized. Students were not actively participating in the behavior modification programs. Student input was not mentioned nor was the concept of an individualized tailored behavior change program used in the regular classroom setting.

Chapter III

ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES AND EVALUATION INSTRUMENTS

Goal and Expectation

The following goal and expectation was projected for this practicum: to promote individual daily academic achievement in the targeted elementary students by increasing their pro-social behavior; as a residual long term expectation, the probability of violence initiated by the targeted elementary grade students in the school and community will be reduced or prevented.

Expected Outcomes

The following outcomes were projected for this practicum:

1. Fourteen of the 21 targeted students' scores in math and reading will reflect an increase from the 2nd percentile to the 8th percentile on the Level 1 Wide-Range Achievement Test-Revised.

2. Of the 21 targeted students, all will demonstrate pro-social skill development by completing at least

two instructional periods without being referred to the principal or the school counselor.

3. The parents of 12 of 14 targeted students will receive no more than 1 academic deficiency notice citing problem behavior as a cause for academic failure.

4. All 21 of the targeted students will demonstrate behaviorally correct conduct in at least two of the pro-social deficit areas noted on the Child Behavior Checklist Teacher Report Form, i.e.,
   a. Apathy - not considerate of others, does not seem to feel guilty after misbehaving, and or unable to compromise when warranted

   b. Physical aggression - fighting/threatens pupils, argumentative, defiant, talks back, and/or non-compliant

   c. Lack of self control - talks out of turn disturbs others

   d. Reads social situation incorrectly - hangs around others who get into trouble

e. Unable to interact with a number of different peers or establish interpersonal relationships

5. Positive contact with the home will be made at least once for each of the 21 targeted students.

Measurement of Outcomes

The teacher, i.e., this writer, maintained a log of daily observations recording significant incidents, negative behavior, and the participants' actions in applying pro-social skills without teacher intervention. The participants constructed a "Big Book" illustrating and describing in a personal journal format their individual behavior/social conduct. Differences in the number of negative descriptive adjectives in these journal entries were compared to the number of positive words used in the post writings relative to the children's self perceptions awareness and school/community relationships.

During the "Morning Meetings" community conflicts were discussed. Students' discussions were taped. Positive outcomes were measured by the students' definition of problem behavior, their role in solving the problem, and participation in the discussions. For the purpose of

assessing and documenting daily progress of the participants, at the end of the school day an informal whole class talk sessions were also taped.

The profile pre and post test teacher observation scores on the Achenbach Child Behavior Checklist Teacher Report Form and the Walker-McConnell Subscales results indicated an increase of at least one pro-social skill per participant. Ideally, this writer's goal was to enable each child to score within at least the 50th percentile on each subscale. The participants chosed two personal pro-social behavior goals. Individualized activities correlated to the desired behavior changes were also selected by the participants. Each child's days were monitored using smiling face stickers to reflect positive daily occurrences, such as, no referrals to principal's or counselor's office, no parent phone calls and/or misbehavior notices mailed home. A progress chart denoted personal pro-social behavior goals that were obtained during math and reading instructional periods. However, level one of the Wide-Range Achievement Test-Revised standard pretest and posttest math and reading scores were compared in order to measure levels of academic achievement.

Since the class had been unable to demonstrate worthy pro-social conduct during class parties, as a culminating activity, a class party was held to simply document and

compare their conduct to previously held social activities. The outcome documented the participants' individual ability to interact with a number of peers in a closed social setting.

Chapter IV

SOLUTION STRATEGY

Discussion and Evaluation of Possible Solutions

Given the problem that the targeted urban learners were unable to establish a worthy harmonious relationship with peers and that this pro-social deficit seemed to impede their academic achievement, the following solutions, among others, were examined to determine whether suitable for the participants: The Behavioral Group Approach by LaGreca and Santogross (1980), Teaching Children Behavior Change Techniques by Downing (1977), and Project K.I.N.D.-Teaching Conflict Resolution and Problem Solving by Masters (1991). Project K.I.N.D., i.e., Keeping Interfering Noncompliance Down (Masters, 1991) divided 18 second grade students into two social skills training groups, Group A and Group B. The Child Behavior Checklist (CBCL) Teacher Report form and the Parent Form were used as pretest and posttest evaluation and measurement instruments. Based on the review, Project KIND, a conflict resolution strategies program, focused on symptoms such as anxiety, hostility, and aggressiveness rather than actual pro-social deficits.

However, the review revealed documentation that Project KIND was successful in that particular context and remained in use by fellow teachers. The Downing (1977) program focused on teaching elementary school children how to teach themselves to change their conduct. The small groupings promoted efficiency for counselors. This study cited satisfactory results with regard to those targeted students in a particular setting not applicable to the writer's setting. The LaGreca and Santogrossi (1980) "Behavioral Group Approach" research report cited that role-play situations in social skills training increased the children's ability to verbally interact with peers.

Solutions gleaned from the literature reviews failed to provide evidence that student resistance to the behavior change project was a concern and techniques did not promote discovery and transfer learning. Parental home-based involvement strategies were used to control problem behavior. This would indicate that parent involvement dictated the success of the solution. However, ideas for the PASS project were gleaned from the aforementioned authors. Therefore, implementation of the PASS project was based upon methods gleaned from the reviews. The methods were modified and tailored based upon the particular individual pro-social needs of the targeted participants as well as the thrust to reduce the threat of violence

in the school and community among these urban learners.

As a result of modifying and tailoring these strategies and methods, this writer devised the Pro-social Awareness Skills Strategies project. The acronym PASS, coined by this writer, henceforth refers to the project and its individualized techniques.

Description of Selected Solution

The targeted urban learners, i.e., the participants seemed unaware of the need to conduct themselves in a pro-social manner. Therefore, this praticum, a behavior change project, was designed to instill an awareness in the urban learner of the impact that problem behavior has on their academic success as well as social character building. Hence, the focus was on the problem behavior of at-risk elementary grade children from dysfunctional and/or socio-economically disadvantaged homes. Thus, the PASS project was tailored for the elementary grade urban learner. The PASS goal was two-fold. PASS provided behaviorally correct options relative to reducing violence in the classroom/school via early intervention awareness pro-social skills training, thereby, promoting academic achievement as well as a safe school environment.

The writer's PASS solution encompassed a variety of universal approaches. The PASS solution aim was to focus on two pro-social deficits per participant. Based upon

the participants' needs for the development of pro-social conduct goals and attainment, individualized strategies (See Appendix A) were designed so that each participant became aware of his/her own individual social deficts, acknowledged improvements were necessary, was a partner in the behavior change process, and was responsible for at least one of the two specified pro-social behaviors. PASS included discussions, creative writing, exchanging peer partners-a rotating buddy system, and computer buddy activities were used to strengthen existing pro-social behavior among the participants. Via recreational reading assignments and observed incidents involving other problem behavior children, the participants learned how to view occurrences objectively. They described the conduct or incident then objectively apply a behaviorally correct option to the situation.

The PASS project encompassed four dimensions. The Self dimension operated on the assumption that all children want to succeed and belong to an acceptable group. Self-assessments enabled the participants to plan their individual successes while developing self-awareness. Although journals and other forms of documentation were developed by the participants, verbal interaction was essential to this phase. The teacher facilitated and monitored the project. The children were active

participants and were the decision makers.

The Home-Community Link dimension allowed the participants to use their primary social context as an independent arena to observe and apply learned pro-social skills in an unstructured environment. Parental participation was desired but was not key to the success of the PASS project. However, parents were mailed a notification letter during the Self Dimension period (implementation stage) regarding their child's participation in the PASS project (See Appendix B). During the week long Spring Break period, self-assessing activities were completed in the home. Parents were also given written information about this assignment.

The teacher moved into the role of mediator during the School dimension. The Progress Chart was used to post weekly performance based scores/grades (See Appendix C). A "How Was Your Day?" chart using smiling face stickers reflected the individual participant's days when pro-social conduct was prevalent. The Assessment dimension entailed evaluating post journal writings, self-assessment activities, and classroom observations. The participants planned, organized, and conducted a class party as a culminating means of observing and measuring behavior change. During the Assessment Dimension focus period, the smiling faces were counted and student-desired awards

were presented for the most smiling faces. This competitive technique served as an incentive to maintain and sustain the students' interest in the behavior change project. Throughout PASS, the students conducted morning meetings, end of school day self evaluations, and accomplished self-selected tasks or activities designed to correct their particular pro-social deficits. The participants developed behaviorally correct options based upon the daily pro-social awareness skills sessions.

The participants' development plan of action involved utilizing the mandated early childhood morning meeting concept to introduce the idea of improving academic achievement by: soliciting from the participants suggestions on how to improve grades, soliciting causes without blaming classmates (focus was on the correlation of poor classroom conduct to poor grades), build a consensus that there was a classroom problem, and recruiting student volunteers to help plan the program. All of the participants were involved in the planning phase.

As a precaution against resistance to the behavior change project, participation was not teacher imposed. Participants recruited fellow classmates (other targeted classmates) to voluntarily participate in the program. A follow-up meeting was conducted using the initial volunteers as discussion leaders during the Self dimension

focus period. Student identifed their individual behavioral problems.

In the participants' planning phase, the students selected an area to display progress charts, their student "Big Book" journals, creative writings, and/or picture stories describing chosen behaviorally correct options.

In order to reinforce the desired pro-social behavior, PASS promoted student involvement strategies that utilized discovery and transfer learning activities. The participants applied these skills in the home and community, as well as in the school setting.

The PASS project design was appropriate for all instructional levels. Art, music, technology, and physical activities were incorporated into the program. PASS embraced those universal behavior modification solutions relative to disadvantaged elementary school aged children and their social context. The participants were taught behavior modification strategies with minimum conditioning.

Report of Action Taken

Three major information needs were obtained. Data to support program effectiveness, information on the strengths and weaknesses of the PASS program, and information on the social validity of PASS as perceived by the participants were recorded. The writer was a

participant observer interacting with the participants on a daily basis as mediator and facilitator. The writer recorded all occurrences and events whether unexpected or planned. Unexpected reports of events observed by other stakeholders such as the principal, other teachers, parents, even reports by students or any other persons with an interest in the conduct of the PASS participants were also entered into the log.

The One-Group Pretest-Posttest design was employed to collect, measure, and determine whether PASS had increased pro-social skills among the participants. The pre and post Wide-Range Achievement Test-Revised results, the Walker-McConnell Teacher Preferred Social Behavior subscale, the Peer-Preferred Social Behavior subscale, and the Social Competency School Adjustment subscale observation scores were compared.

The teacher as evaluator (the writer) observed the quality of the students' classwork. Other evaluation data was obtained via the following procedures:

1. the participants' pre and post "Big Book" journals or picture stories depicting and illustrating how they handled an incident were compared.
2. Pre-taped discussion (rap) sessions were compared to post-taped sessions.
3. Pre and post math and reading test results were compared.

4. The Walker-McConnell Subscales pre and post scores were compared.
5. The number of referrals made to principal, counselor or parent notifications related to problem behavior were tallied.
6. The participants conducted the class party and some participants received awards for obtaining the highest count of pro-social behavior or avoidance of hostile situations.
7. Teacher pre and post conduct notes and student conduct grades were compared.
8. The participants were polled and surveyed during the program assessment period to determine whether PASS was a socially valid program.

The PASS program, a classroom management project was implemented via a one day "get ready" development session. During this session, the targeted urban learners were presented the following questions for an immediate oral response: What were the reasons for their individual "bad" grades? How could they improve their individual report card grades? In the course of defining problem behavior, they were asked could problem behavior be a cause of "bad" grades. If so, without blaming each other could they identify at least two problem behaviors that they have observed during instructional or classroom independent

activity periods. They were also asked whether this was a "good" or positive condition under which to learn. If not, did they want a change in the classroom environment, i.e., to get rid of the causes of problem behavior within their power base that prevented them from making "good" grades. Each targeted participant identified individual problem behavior that seemed not to contribute to a positive classroom environment.

Once the problem behaviors were identified, the PASS program was introduced. The targeted participants were asked if they wanted to be a part of this effort to increase their individual academic achievement by reducing problem behaviors. A consensus was reached. A notification letter was sent to parents. Thus the targeted urban leraners became motivated PASS participants. The 21 third grade inner city urban learner participants' first task was to designate a site to store and present their PASS progress charts and products.

In the implementation phase, the participants constructed individual "Big Books during the Self (awareness) Dimension. These books contained five pages. On each page the participants drew a picture detailing an event or incident that he/she discovered something about his/her character, values, self worth, and/or hostile incidents which he/she could have avoided. This

activity was assigned to be completed during the Spring Break period. The activity objective and the participant's directions for completing the activity were explained in a parent letter which accompanied the "Big Book." When the participants returned to school from the Spring Break, during the daily mandated "Morning Meetings", they evaluated individual "Big Book" entries for options taken.

In addition, to the Big Book concept, the participants' behavior was being recorded for the 12 weeks via a conduct chart entitled by the writer as "How Was Your Day?" During the daily end of the school day evaluation period, each participant would assess his/her day. Based upon conduct that was appropriate, a smiling face was placed on the chart in a box corresponding to the date and participant's name. In the event his/her conduct was not appropriate, that date was darkened in. Even though the Self Dimension focus period concluded in 4 weeks, behaviorally correct options as alternative courses of actions were continuously being discovered by the participants.

The Home-Community Link Dimension focus period was implemented by tasking the participants to join or start a club outside of the school environment. They were later tasked with planning the end of year class party. This preparation was conducted in the community.

The purpose of these activities were to direct the participants in applying pro-social behaviorally correct options in the home/community, i.e., the options that were revealed and developed during the Self Dimension focus period. Weekly progress was maintained on their ability to apply pro-social skills without school supervision. During this 4 week focus period, in the daily "morning meetings", the participants reported on incidents observed in the home/community or their own hostile incidents occurring in the home/community where behaviorally correct options were not employed. Their incidents were critiqued in a positive manner by the PASS group. The daily recording of "How Was Your Day" conduct chart was also maintained during this focus period. Six weeks into the 12 week PASS program, the Comprehensive Tests of Basic Skills (CTBS) was administered city-wide. In addition, a field trip was taken during the 7th week and the 8th week of the PASS Home/Community Link Dimension. Student behavior and academic reports were mailed home during the 6 week midpoint of the PASS behavior change project positively stating the participants progress.

The School Dimension, i.e., the classroom management focus period was implemented via allowing the participants to subtotal the accumulative number of "How Was Your Day" smiling faces obtained during the Self and Home/Community

Link Dimension focus periods. They compared that total to the number of days where no smiling faces were individually obtained. With the focus upon applying behaviorally correct options in classroom problem behavior areas, the School Dimension progress chart was maintained. This chart was designed to record two behaviorally correct personal goals per participant to be obtained during instructional and independent study periods based upon the participants' individually identified pro-social deficits.

After 11 weeks of the PASS focus periods, the participants were assessed during the 12th week and final week of school before summer vacation. Due to the ease of scoring, the Walker-McConnell Subscale of Teacher-Perferred Social Behavior was used as the posttest observation instrument. The math and reading vocabulary portions only of the Wide-Range Achievement Test-Revised were used to measure the participants academic achievement, in addition to the CTBS results.

In order to provide interested parents valid progress results, during the final Parent Teacher Association (PTA) school night open house, those parents were asked to complete the Achenbach (1991) Parent report Child Behavior Checklist/4-18 on their individual child's competencies and problems observed subsequent to PASS.

Chapter V

RESULTS, DISCUSSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Results

The PASS program provided various strategies to reduce pro-social behavior deficits in 21 inner-city urban third grade learners that exhibited physical aggression towards each other. Hence, this self-directed disruptive conduct inhibited their ability to establish or maintain worthy harmonious relationships with their peer group and most certainly impeded their academic growth. These urban learners were unaware of the impact that their misbehavior had upon their overall well-being. There was a need for pro-social awareness skills training.

The PASS program was designed to offer the participants a sense of pro-social awarness and behaviorally correct options which they could apply on a daily basis in the home and community as well as in the school setting in order to avoid hostile situations, thus providing the participants with a somewhat stress-free learning environment. The PASS program effectiveness on two participants with mild social-emotional deficits also

produced some noticeable change in those participants.

The expected outcomes and the results for this practicum were as follows: Outcome #1 - Fourteen of the 21 targeted students' scores in math and reading will reflect an increase from the 2nd percentile to the 8th percentile on the Level 1 Wide-Range Achievement Test-Revised (WRAT). This outcome was not achieved in that only 6 of the 21 participants scored within the 5th percentile on the WRAT. Outcome #2 - Twenty-one of the 21 participants will demonstrate pro-social skill development by completing at least two instructional periods without being referred to the principal or the school guidance counselor. This outcome was not achieved in that only 19 of the projected 21 participants demonstrated pro-social skill development by completing at least 2 instructional periods without being referred to the principal or the school guidance counselor. Outcome #3 -The parents of 12 out of 14 participants will receive no more that 1 academic deficiency notice citing problem behavior as a cause of academic failure. This outcome was not achieved in that only 8 of the projected 12 participants parents were mailed no more that 1 academic deficiency notice citing problem behavior as a primary cause for academic failure. Outcome #4 - Twenty-one out of the 21 participants will demonstrate behaviorally correct

conduct in at least 2 of the pro-social deficit areas noted on the Child Behavior Checklist Teacher Report Form, i.e., apathy, physical aggression, lack of self control, reads social situations incorrectly, and unable to interact with a number of different peers. This outcome was not achieved in that only 18 of the 21 participants demonstrated behaviorally correct conduct in one or more of the pro-social deficit areas noted on the Achenbach Child Behavior Checklist and Teacher Report Form. Of the 18, sixteen were less likely to be apathetic towards the feeling of fellow participants and other school peers. Yet, only 10 of the 16 restrained from physical aggression, i.e., fighting/threatening peers. They seemed to have developed the ability to read social situations more objectively. However, all participants refrained from being argumentative, openly defiant, and talking back to authority figures. Sixteen demonstrated a moderate increase in self control and avoided being with peers that tend to get into more severe trouble. They also were able to interact with a number of different peers and establish worthy home and school relationships. Outcome #5 - Positive contact with the home will be made at least once for each participant. The outcome was achieved in that positive contact was made at least once for each of the 21 participants.

Although the projected numbers of participants to demonstrate improvement in this 12 week practicum were not obtained, those that PASS did affect validated the successfulness of employing these types of strategies.

The behaviorally correct options that each child was provided, whether avoidance of hostile situations, ignoring negative comments, merely walking away, or minding your own business, were so powerful that the classroom was often so quiet during independent work periods that the observer felt uncomfortable. Therefore, classical music was played during these periods. The use of music encouraged each participant to work quietly (McIntyre & Cowell, 1984) and to use soft moderate speaking tones when holding group or one-on-one conversations with peers.

Discussion

Subsequent to the concept development of pro-social behavior and the targeted students acknowledging the negative impact of problem behavior on overall achievement, the PASS Self (awareness) Dimension was launched with balloons and fanfare. In the course of "morning meetings," the participants were actively involved in the discussions about Self and the Home/Community Link. The PASS participants evaluated their primary social context and applied behaviorally correct options in hostile home and community situations and incidents. The PASS implementation produced positive noticeable changes even in various classroom settings as well as walking through the halls traveling to and from Music, Physical Education, and Art classes. Those special class teachers complimented the PASS participants on their overall behavior. Seven out of eight PASS participants that were Chapter 1 students walked to and from the Chapter 1 Computer Lab without an adult escort. These students were observed walking in a straight line. This denoted compliance and trustworthiness. In view of this improvement, these participants were selected as a demonstration Chapter I Lab group by the Lab Specialist. There were no more than three participants that seemed to lose interest in PASS. Therefore, revisions were made to their individualized

strategy plan.

In order to provide the participants with a sense of accountability and an awareness of the consequences for problem behavior, the smiling face "How Was Your Day?" incentive was implemented in the Self Dimension focus period rather than the proposed School Dimension focus period. In addition, the use of Disney classic story videos among others were used to enhance Self (awareness) of morals and values, i.e., self worth, self respect, honesty, being responsible for your actions, and identifying good character.

Four participants were reported by other teachers for fighting during playground lunch recess. However, this was dealt by allowing the students, during the morning meeting, to discuss the cause and then to state options that could have been used to avoid the fights. Since the fights were with students outside of the participants' classroom peer group, as a spin off, those students from other classrooms were permitted by their teachers to sit in on the PASS morning meeting.

In the succeeding morning meetings, the PASS participants stated in positive terms, based upon the previous day problem behavior, their plan for a "good" day, i.e., "I plan to play peacefully" or "I plan to avoid hostile situations."

CTBS results reflected a slight increase in academic achievement when compared on a national level. However, improvements were made socially. The participants' third and fourth school advisory individual report cards contained a positive progress note referencing conduct improvements during the instructional periods. By telephone, parents were given positive reports as well as an invitation to observe their child in a social setting outside of the home environment, the class party-a culminating activity.

In the twelfth and final week of PASS, 12 parents of the participants attended the class party as observers not as chaperons. While their child participated in the social function, each parent was given a copy of the Walker-McConnell Scale of Social Competence and School Adjustment Profile/Rating Form and asked to comment on their child's social competencies. Positive comments were given from the peer-preferred subscale. Ten of the 12 parents could see that their individual child's social behavior had improved to the point that their child could interact with a number of different peers, seemed less aggressive, seemed motivated to "do" homework, demonstrated improved relationships with siblings and other family members, and was less likely to read a social situation

incorrectly. As far as the school adjustment subscale, all twelve parents commented on the obvious measurable improvement in class work via graded papers displayed in the classroom or sent home. The parents were most impressed with the construction of the "Big Books." The parents read their individual child's entries and were fascinated by their child's ability to write/depict causes for problem behavior and the relationship to their home social context.

In order to address the information need of the social validity of PASS as perceived by the participants, each participant was debriefed immediately following the party clean-up. Each child spoke well of PASS. The most asked question was whether their next grade teacher would have PASS. Although only two children were awarded an individual toy of their choice for the most "How Was Your Day?" smiling faces, a certificate of participation in PASS signed by the school principal and the classroom teacher was presented to each child. (See Appendix D)

The other third grade teacher and the second grade teacher were most interested in PASS. They commented on the fact that PASS controlled the students, thus the teacher was allowed to engage in productive instructional periods with the participants.

Recommendations

Due to the generalizability of problem behavior in children and its correlation to academic achievement, the recommendations are universal. Programs such as PASS should be an integral part of the instructional day, adopted and implemented school-wide in the beginning of the school year, and designed as multi-year programs in order to be sustaining. Teachers must be allocated additional planning time in order to devise individualized strategies for problem behavior children that will instill an awareness in each child that behaviorally correct options are available to them.

Dissemination

PASS should not be implemented unless planning and preparations are made prior to employment. Other teachers as well as the students would benefit from the PASS concept of providing behaviorally correct options to children whom otherwise are not aware of those options that develop pro-social behavior. Therefore, a request for conducting a "teacher to teacher helpshop" on classroom management techniques may be used to present and distribute the "How to Implement PASS" packet.

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APPENDIX A

INDIVIDUALIZED STRATEGIES CHART

The Individualized Strategy Chart

Listed are four major social deficit areas. Each social deficit has an applicable primary individualized strategy assigned and developed by the teacher (writer).

SOCIAL DEFICIT	PRIMARY INDIVIDUALIZED STRATEGY
Apathy	Rotating Buddy System Activities
Physical Aggression, Noncompliance and, Argumentative	Team Building Activities
Lack of Self-Control	Character Development Activities
Misinterpret Social Situations	Role Playing Activites

APPENDIX B

PARENT NOTIFICATION LETTER

PARENT NOTIFICATION LETTER

We are constantly seeking educational and motivational ways to improve and better our students academically. However, the focus must be on the whole child in order to be effective. The urban elementary school child's social context is an important factor in his/her educational growth.

Since all children's conduct can either promote or impede their academic achievement, the school must provide them with the necessary social skills training and education as you must in the home. Therefore, your child's participation in the Pro-social Awareness Skills Strategies (PASS) practicum project will add to your child's overall academic success.

This twelve week project is designed to develop your child's awareness about him/herself socially and to develop a sense of awareness in our children of how their behavior or conduct impacts upon the community as well as the school environment.

As always, in order to be fully effective, we need your continuous support. You may assist by ensuring that your child completes and return all homework or mini-workshop assignments.

APPENDIX C

SAMPLE
BEHAVIORALLY CORRECT PERSONAL GOALS
PROGRESS CHART

Behaviorally Correct Personal Goals

Progress Chart

Behaviorally Correct Personal Goals/Student/Period/Grade	Instructional
Speak in a moderate tone	Math
Respect rights of others	
Work quietly	
Keep hands to self	
Ignore negative comments	
Avoid hostile situations	
Walk away from trouble	

Note: Sustainment of one behaviorally correct personal goal measures success with a grade of C or better on weekly performanced based test.

APPENDIX D

PASS CERTIFICATE OF PARTICIPATION

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

THIS CERTIFICATE

IS AWARDED TO

_____

FOR PARTICIPATION IN P.A.S.S.
THE PRO-SOCIAL AWARENESS SKILLS
STRATEGIES PROJECT
29 MARCH - 18 JUNE 1993

PRINCIPAL

TEACHER